

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 EB-11 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 /145 W

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R 051510Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4536

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK, EEC, PFOR

SUBJECT: LABOR PARTY STIFFENS ANTI-EC STAND

1. LABOR PARTY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE YESTERDAY OVERWHELMINGLY REAFFIRMED THE PARTY'S INTENTION TO SUBMIT THE QUESTION OF BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE EC TO THE BRITISH ELECTORATE, AND TO MAINTAIN UNTIL THEN ITS BOYCOTT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE PARTY'S "OPPOSITION IN PRINCIPLE TO MEMBERSHIP" WAS ONLY NARROWLY DEFEATED.

2. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF RENEGOTIATION IN THE RESOLUTION PASSED, AND IT FELL TO THE PRO-MARKETEERS IN THE DEBATE TO REMIND CONFERENCE THAT IT WAS STILL PARTY POLICY TO RENEGOTIATE THE TERMS OF BRITAIN'S
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MEMBERSHIP BEFORE SUBMITTING THE ISSUE TO THE

ELECTORATE. PETER SHORE, SPEAKING FOR THE ANTI-MARKETEERS, MADE CLEAR TO WILDLY ENTHUSIASTIC DELEGATES THAT RENEGOTIATION MEANT NOTHING LESS THAN DISMANTLING THE TREATY OF ROME, I.E., THAT IT WOULD BE SIMPLY A COVER FOR BRITISH WITHDRAWAL. MICHAEL FOOT, SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, EXPRESSED HIS BASIC AGREEMENT WITH THIS VIEW, BUT ASKED FOR REJECTION OF THE "OPPOSITION IN PRINCIPLE" RESOLUTION FOR THE SAKE OF PARTY UNITY. HE HAS BEEN TELLING PEOPLE ALL WEEK THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO DRIVE THE PRO-MARKETEERS OUT OF THE PARTY LEST SUCH A SPLIT DAMAGE LABOR'S CHANCES IN THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

3. TWO FORMER LABOR MPS, GEORGE THOMSON AND MAURICE FOLEY, AND THE PARTY'S FORMER DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY, GWYN MORGAN -- ALL NOW AT THE EC COMMISSION IN BRUSSELS -- CAME TO BLACKPOOL THIS WEEK WITH BELGIAN COMMISSIONER HENRI SIMONET IN TOW, TO LOBBY ON THE FRINGES OF CONFERENCE ON BEHALF OF BRITISH MEMBERSHIP. THEIR ACTIVITIES DREW DOWN MUCH SCORN AND HOSTILITY AND WERE, ON BALANCE, PROBABLY COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

4. IN ANY EVENT, IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT THE ANTI-MARKETEERS ARE COMPLETELY IN THE ASCENDENCY WITHIN THE PARTY. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE A PERFECTLY RATIONAL CASE TO PUT, THEIR RHETORIC ROSE INCREASINGLY EMOTIONAL, XENOPHOBIC, AND ANTI-FRENCH. THEY PLAN TO MAKE ALL-OUT OPPOSITION TO THE EC A CENTRAL THEME IN LABOR'S GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN. FURTHERMORE, LOOKING AHEAD TO THE DAY WHEN LABOR RETURNS TO POWER, THEY ARE ALREADY AGITATING TO ENTRUST THE TASK OF RENEGOTIATION TO NONE OTHER THAN MICHAEL FOOT AND PETER SHORE, THE TWO MOST IMPLACABLE OPPONENTS OF BRITISH MEMBERSHIP ON ANY TERMS.

5. FRENCH, ITALIAN, DUTCH, AND GERMAN OBSERVERS WATCHED THIS WEEK'S PROCEEDINGS AT BLACKPOOL WITH GROWING DISMAY AND FREELY CONFIDED TO EMBOFF THEIR APPREHENSION ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE EC SHOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE LABOR PARTY WIN THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LONDON11508
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731048/aaaabjda.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Jul-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <20-Nov-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR PARTY STIFFENS ANTI-EC STAND
TAGS: PFOR, UK, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005